

Hope Report: Boomers Look for New Challenges – Survey of  
Baby-Boomer Men’s Dreams: A Life of Adventure After Retirement

**Post-retirement, boomer men want to  
ignore what others see as “appropriate for their age,”  
find something to really sink their teeth into,  
and live life without reference to their age.**

Tokyo – May 24, 2006 – Hakuhodo's Elder Business Development Division constantly monitors Japan’s elders, people aged 50+, through an array of studies and other research. This time the Division cast the spotlight on the self-identities and lifestyles male baby-boomers envisage after retirement with its Survey of Baby-Boomer Men’s Dreams: A Life of Adventure After Retirement. Below we present some preliminary findings of the survey, conducted via the Internet in December 2005 on 411 Japanese males aged 56–58.

The findings show that boomer men’s pre- and post-retirement self-identities undergo a significant change, with figures for myself as a man and myself as a husband soaring. The figures for myself as a man, at 21.2%, is close to 4 times that of the same self-identity pre-retirement (5.3%).

In desirable lifestyles, wanting to live life without being restricted by one’s age and wanting to have something to really sink one’s teeth into – reflections of a desire for stimulation and change – received scores of more than 60%. Passive responses like wanting to live a life appropriate to one’s age and wanting to take life easy received little support.

Furthermore, in the types of relations they hope to have with other generations once they retire, friendships with many people regardless of age, at 60%, was well ahead of the desire to be at home with one’s peers. Male boomers also want to be stimulated by people from many age groups, get to know other generations and create something together with the generation below themselves.

Cleanups, community disaster prevention, and NPOs, all with scores of around 40%, were popular activities our respondents hoped to become involved in once they retire, indicating the degree of their interest in volunteering and community involvement.

Meanwhile, publishing information on the Internet was the top activity respondents wanted to get into by themselves, while travel and parties at home were the top activities they want to do with their wives and children.

Given that responses to all survey questions embodied some aspect of self actualization or realizing dreams, it seems the old concept of retirement as old age and living out the rest of one's life does not hold a lot of water with boomer men. Baby-boom males are the archetypal corporate warriors. Perhaps they have been suppressing their own dreams, preferences and their desire to contribute to their community and society. It appears that once they retire, boomer men are looking forward to living life to the fullest, and realizing their abandoned dreams of adventure.

### **Key findings**

- After retirement, myself as a man and myself as a husband take a huge leap as men's predominant self-identity
- Boomer men look forward to living life without reference to their age and finding something to really get into. Positive responses involving seeking out change and new challenges received scores of upwards of 60%
- In inter-generational ties post-retirement, respondents look to have relationships with various people regardless of their age, indicating a new zeal for intergenerational relations among elders
- More than teaching the generations below them, respondents want stimulation from and hope to understand other generations
- As many as 40% want to get involved with cleanups, community disaster prevention and NPO activities

## Appendix: Survey data

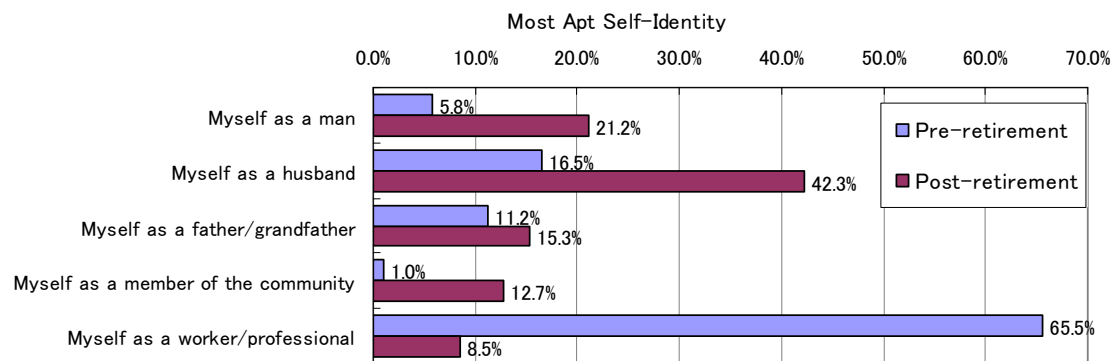
### Survey outline

Period:	December 2005
Area:	Japan
Respondents:	411 baby-boomer males (aged 56–58)
Method:	Internet survey

- **After retirement, myself as a man and myself as a husband take a huge leap as men's predominant self-identity**

We asked boomer men to choose the identity (envisaged role) most appropriate to themselves pre-retirement (now) and post-retirement (their future ideal). The results for myself as a man and myself as a husband showed a huge increase from pre- to post-retirement. Not so surprisingly, results for myself as a husband nearly quadrupled from 5.8% pre-retirement to 21.2% post-retirement.

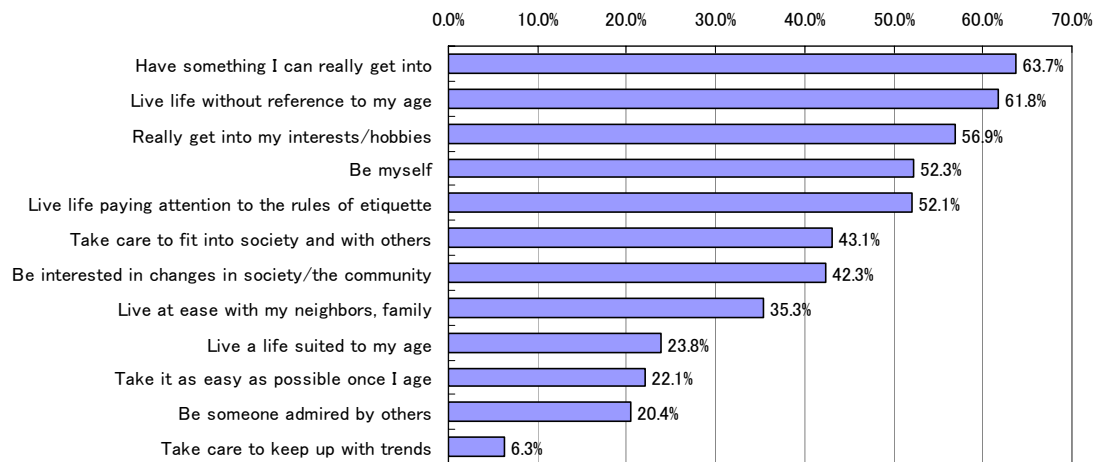
Perhaps these changes stem from men's desire to realize a life of adventure and their own diversions that they were not fully able to enjoy during their job-focused days in the workforce.



- **Boomer men look forward to living life without reference to their age and finding something to really get into. Positive responses involving seeking out change and new challenges received scores of upwards of 60%**

When we asked them how they wanted to approach life after retirement, our respondents gave finding something to really get into and living life without reference to their age scores of more than 60%. Perhaps men need to embrace change and new challenges in order to live the adventurous life and feel like they are men. Meanwhile, the low responses rates for living a life befitting my age and taking it as easy as possible once I am old, make it fair to say that there is not much support for the idea of living one's life out quietly and in solitude.

Approach to Life After Retirement

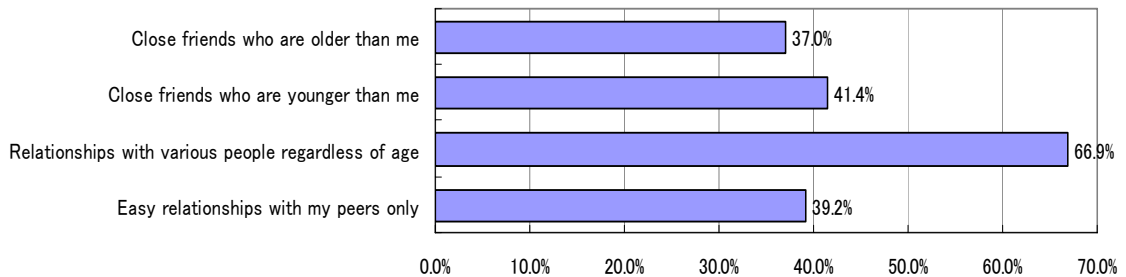


**In inter-generational ties post-retirement, respondents look to have relationships with various people regardless of their age, indicating a new zeal for intergenerational relations among elders**

On the question of which generations they wanted to have relations with after retirement, the top response, at 66.9%, was having a variety of friends regardless of their age.

Conversely, having easy relationships only with one’s peers received a score of just 39.2%. Until recently, it was customary for older people to associate with their own generation, which shared the same physical issues and interests. However, boomer men seem to be more active and sociable than their predecessors, actively seeking out ties with other generations even as they age.

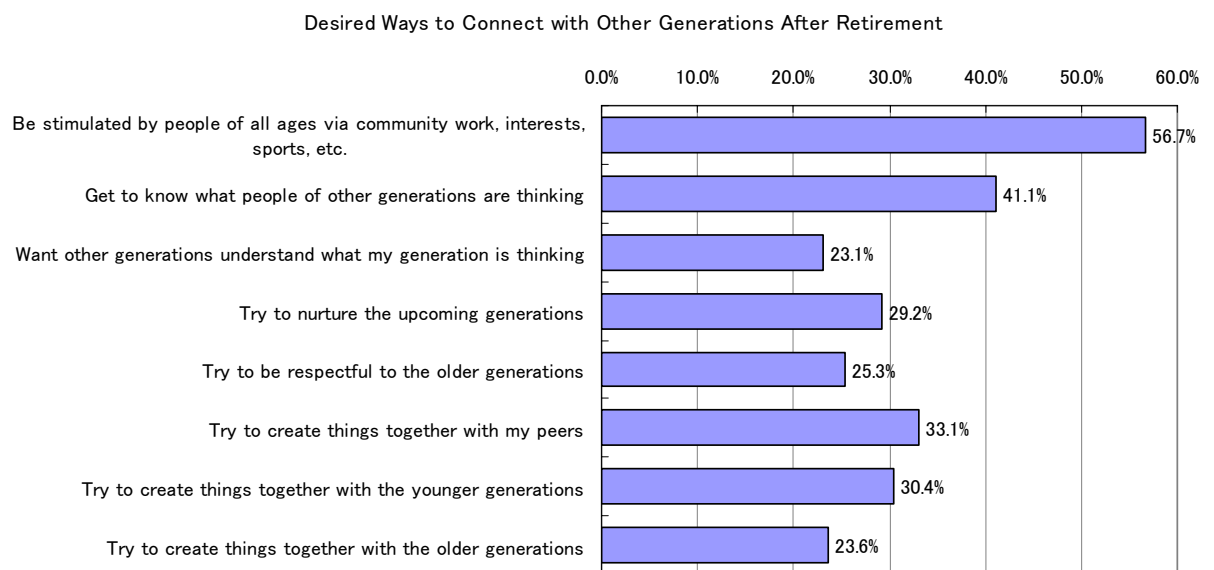
Desirable Generations to be Friendly with After Retirement



• **More than teaching the generations below them, respondents want stimulation from and hope to understand other generations**

When we asked them precisely what kinds of relationships they wanted with other generations when they retire, our respondents gave high scores to being stimulated by people of all ages via community work, their interests, sports, etc. (56.7%) and getting to know what people from other generations think (41.1%). Conversely, the

hope that other generations would understand what boomers think (23.1%) and desire to nurture younger generations (29.2%) received comparatively lower scores. It appears that the old way of aging, with tales of the good old days, lecturing the up-coming generations, and having the young pay them homage may be a thing of the past for baby-boomer men. Today, with their strong desire to continue to grow and be stimulated in old age, they are more likely to try to learn from and understand other generations.



- **As many as 40% want to get involved with cleanups, community disaster prevention and NPO activities**

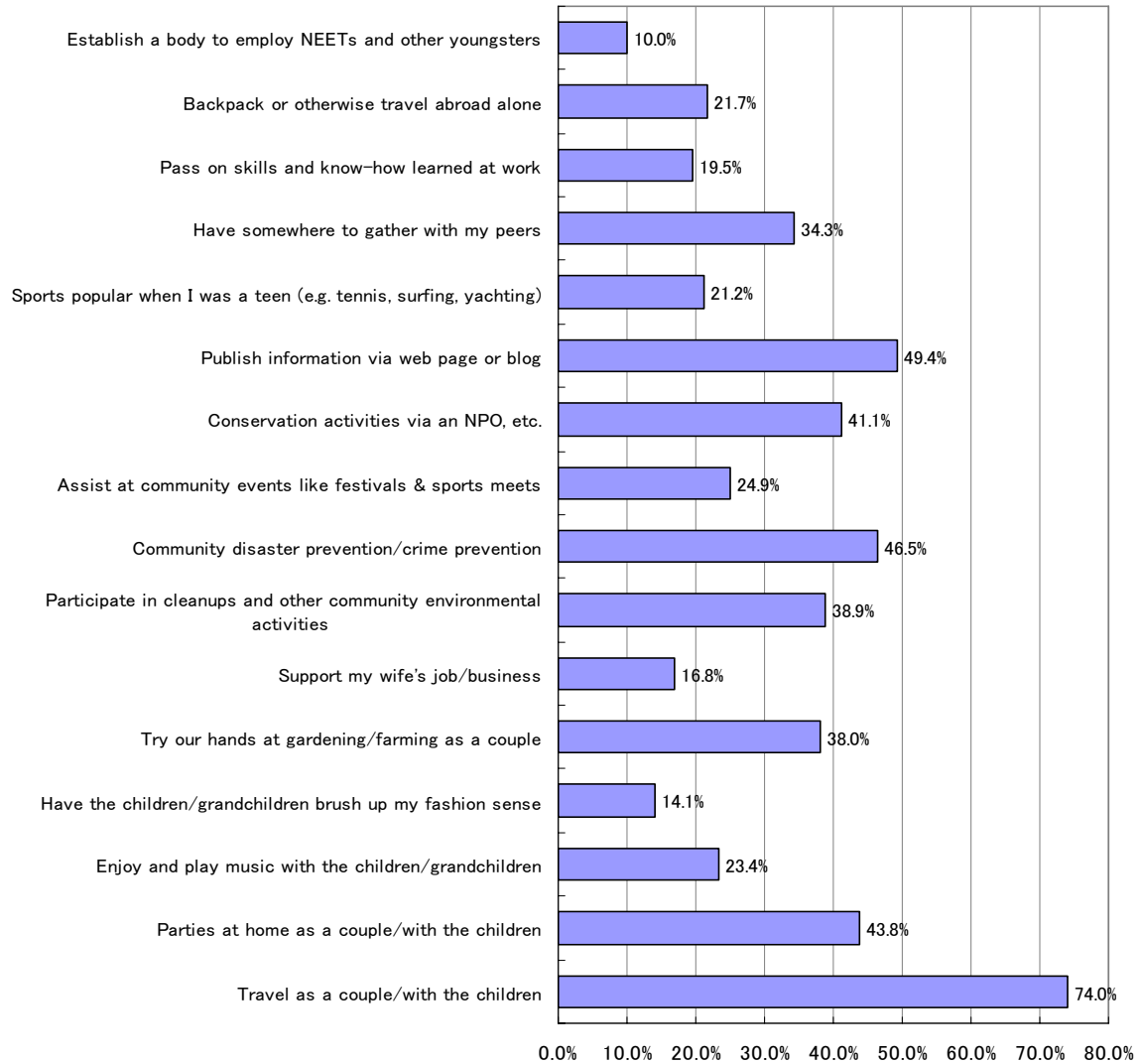
When we asked boomer males what they specifically hope to get involved in once they retire, backpacking alone and playing sports that were popular in their youth stood out in activities to be done by themselves, while family holidays and parties at home were prominent among activities with family and as a couple.

At the same time, activities like cleanup campaigns, community disaster prevention activities and participating in NGOs each attracted around 40% of respondents, indicative of the group's desire to contribute to society and participate in voluntary activities.

Aside from seeking to realize the dreams and the hopes for adventure they had in their youth, perhaps the men are reassessing their ties to their community and society, reflecting on the ways they have left everything in the hands of their wives and families, and now feel a stronger sense of dedication.

In all, it would be fair to say that baby-boom males are building ties with people from many walks of life, and seeking out an active, youthful life.

Desired Post-Retirement Activities



Contact:

Corporate Public Relations Division

Ushio Hirasawa: [USHIO.HIRASAWA@hakuodo.co.jp](mailto:USHIO.HIRASAWA@hakuodo.co.jp)

Mariko Fujimoto: [MARIKO.FUJIMOTO@hakuodo.co.jp](mailto:MARIKO.FUJIMOTO@hakuodo.co.jp)

Tel: +81-(0)3-5446-6161 Fax: +81-(0)3-5446-6166

Elder Business Development Division

Setsuo Sakamoto

Tel: +81-(0)3-5446-4355